

**HEALTH COMMITTEE  
of the  
Suffolk County Legislature**

**Minutes**

A regular meeting of the Health Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held at the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York, in the Rose Y. Caracappa Auditorium on Thursday, **August 23, 2001** at 10:00 a.m.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Legislator Ginny Fields, Chairperson  
Legislator Brian Foley, Vice-Chair  
Legislator Martin Haley  
Legislator Maxine Postal

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Paul Sabatino II, Counsel to the Legislature  
Mary Skiber, Legislative Aide to Legislator Fields  
Chris Reimann, Legislative Aide to Presiding Officer Tonna  
Dr. Clare Bradley, Commissioner, SC Department of Health Services  
Bonnie Godsmen, IR. County Executive's Office  
Mary Howe, Budget Review Office  
Rich Couch, American Cancer Society  
Ann Marie Carbonetto, SC Department of Health Services  
Terry Allar, SC Department of Planning  
Tom Contegni, SC Department of Social Services  
Other Interested Parties

**Minutes Taken By:**

Kimberly Castiglione, Legislative Secretary

*(The meeting was called to order at 9:50 a.m.)*

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

Good morning. We will begin with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Maxine Postal.

*(Salutation)*

Why don't we switch over to Coram Health Center until Bob Garfinkle gets here. Maybe Terry you could come up and anybody else that wants to share information about Coram. We will turn off the microphones.

*(Executive Session 9:50 a.m. to 10:40 a.m.)*

**LEGISLATOR HALEY:**

I request for the record that we no longer have executive board meetings or any meetings concerning leases or the operations of facilities without representation from DPW.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

Duly noted. Thank you. Hopefully we will never have to have another executive session, but we will follow that recommendation.

**TABLED RESOLUTIONS**

**I.R. 1490      Adopting Local Law - 2001, a Local Law to establish  
healthy bottled water labeling law. (Alden). Consumer Protection  
Prime Committee.**

I would like to make a motion to table.

**LEGISLATOR HALEY:**

Second.

**LEGISLATOR POSTAL:**

Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

Yes.

**LEGISLATOR POSTAL:**

I believe that – I know that the prime sponsor is in the process of working on the bill. I haven't seen a final copy. So I would support that.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

All in favor? Opposed? Tabled. **(Vote: 4/0/0/0)**

**I.R. 1496(P) Adopting Local Law No. – 2000, a Local Law to extend smoking ban to 50-foot radius outside County buildings and hospitals. (Carpenter)**

I have been advised that there was an amendment to this bill and we are going to ask Counsel if he will advise us.

**MR. SABATINO:**

Yes, Madam Chair. The corrected copy was filed in a timely fashion for this meeting on August 20<sup>th</sup>. The changes that the – the proposed 50 foot ban at entrances to hospital facilities or County buildings will now be limited only to those entrances which are accessible to the public. So it won't be all entrances to those buildings, only those that would be designated as accessible to the public at large.

**LEGISLATOR POSTAL:**

Motion to approve.

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

Second.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

All in favor? Opposed? Approved. **(Vote: 4/0/0/0)**

**I.R. 1665 (P) Directing the County Department of Public Works to implement enhanced pesticide spraying notification via reverse E-911 Program. (Binder)**

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

This was tabled at the last meeting for what reason? Do we know? If we could just ask the Commissioner to step forward to the table, please.

**LEGISLATOR POSTAL:**

And, Madam Chair, while she is coming up, I think that we really need also to have the Department of Public Works here since –

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

As well as the Police Department.

**LEGISLATOR POSTAL:**

That's right. I think that there are a number of questions that need to be addressed by those other departments as well.

**COMM. BRADLEY:**

I know Public Works as of a few days ago is arranging a meeting with the sponsor and FRES, not the police, because FRES is really the one responsible for this system. The meeting has not been set yet.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

I am going to make a motion to table.

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

Second.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

All in favor? Opposed? Tabled. **(Vote: 4/0/0/0)**

**INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS**

**I.R. 1694 (P) Establishing Smoking Prevention and Cessation Program  
for adolescent males in Suffolk County. (Haley)**

**LEGISLATOR HALEY:**

Motion.

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

Second for purposes of discussion.

**LEGISLATOR HALEY:**

I think what happens, and one of my initial reactions was that had I put this bill in prior to the one that was put in for the other gender, I probably would be hung by the nearest yardarm. And obviously for the normal concerns is that we, you know, discrimination against gender doesn't take the form of just against females, it can be against males. So we always have to be sensitive in those arenas.

When we talk about cessation, I'm sure that there is something unique – obviously there is something unique to smoking related illnesses to females as there are to males. I know that specifically that we have a problem with young teenage women. There seems to be an increase in their smoking habits and maybe the males in turn have been somewhat steady or maybe even declining to some extent. So that I would say that any smoking cessation program really should be for both genders. However, if in this particular arena or this particular period of time let's say we find a significant increase in females, then naturally you would approve those resources to that extent. Let's say that 90% of resources might go to that, 10% might go to males. Whatever it is, I think you need to have that flexibility. My statement is simply saying that, and there is male related – there are issues amongst males that don't relate to females that I think need that attention.

I would say that all this simply does is say that we are going to spend the attention that is necessary for males as we do females. And at any given time, and if it is five to ten years from now, I would hope that if male teenagers all of a sudden it is reversed and they are on the upswing and females have smartened up and they are no longer smoking, that we would put the energy in that direction. That is all this is, is a response to that.

**LEGISLATOR POSTAL:**

Madam Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

I would like to respond. First of all, I think that you know my history about smoking prevention and cessation programs and just the whole problem related to young people. I think we do and we have heard much, much testimony from the Commissioner about the programs that we provide and we have heard it from the American Cancer Society and from many other people that we are trying to do something to change the way that young people smoke.

However, one of I think the glaring problems that we have is that males do not get pregnant. I think that there are some other things that are aimed at females and the numbers are proving that, that we do need to at least bring attention to it more so and the way that the attention was brought was by putting this bill in to say we have a problem and let's pay attention to the problem. It wasn't to discriminate against males because that's not the aim of the bill at all. It was because there are some problems that are particularly aimed at females. Maxine.

**LEGISLATOR POSTAL:**

If I could. I don't think that we're talking about shifting resources from one gender to another. What you said is absolutely correct, that the motivation for the previous bill had to do more with approach than resources. What we are seeing looking at statistics is that, and you said it, you are absolutely on target, that while the percentage of individuals in every age group starting to smoke or smoking is dropping, the percentage for males is dropping. The one group, demographic group which is not dropping is that of adolescent females. So what it tells us is that we need a different approach because we have a smoking cessation and prevention program that the department has been providing Countywide working with school districts and other youth agencies. It is not that that is going to be curtailed for males, it is that there is some message out there that is not getting through to adolescent females. That doesn't mean we need to spend more money on females than we do on males, it means that we need to take a look at how we need to communicate to women, young women, so that we'll be more successful.

I am going to compare it to eating disorders. There are, as a matter of fact, more males who have eating disorders nowadays than used to have eating disorders say ten years ago. But it is still overwhelmingly –

**LEGISLATOR HALEY:**

You are not talking about Legislator Guldi, are you?

**LEGISLATOR POSTAL:**

I don't think that is the disorder. But there is still an overwhelmingly larger percentage of females who suffer from eating disorders. That means that there is something that's – some message that is coming to young women that makes them more prone or more at risk to eating disorders. It is the same thing with smoking. We are not taking resources away from young men. I have two sons, one of whom who smokes on and off. Marty, if I could give anything as a smoker who struggled against smoking for most of my life, I would wish that he had never started and that he would stop permanently. It is not that I don't want to see young males, and males of any age, not smoking, it is that I think we need to develop a special message for those young women where the message that we are delivering is not taking. So I support your resolution, but I just want us all to understand that the intent of the original bill was not to take anything away from fighting against smoking with males and we are not – the intent of it was also not shifting resources away from that.

**LEGISLATOR HALEY:**

I understand.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

I want to ask the Commissioner, so if the first bill is passed and the second bill is passed, what does that mean to you in the department? How do you – what will you do with these two bills?

**COMM. BRADLEY:**

Well, many of the gender differences we have already started considering in our programs, especially for females. But there are also some male differences in terms of smokeless tobacco and also cigars. I mean, it is true what you say, that women have not decreased and there is a special thing that women do and that is get pregnant and there are very special medical issues around smoking and pregnancy. But there are also some issues with male smoking. It just, I think, directs us to focus our attention at those differences to help

us with our message to all people who do smoke or who may think about smoking. So again, it is not that we are going to have this pot of money for women and this pot of money for men. It is just when we go out –

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

Attention we are talking about. The attention is directed toward each sex.

**COMM. BRADLEY:**

Right, and the differences between the two.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

Okay. We appreciate anything that can be done that can help young people. We have a motion to approve and a second. All in favor? Opposed? Motion is approved. **(Vote: 4/0/0/0)**

**I.R. 1729 (P) Designating September as “Alcoholism and Drug Addiction Recovery Month” in Suffolk County. (Fields)**

I will make a motion to approve.

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

Second.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

All in favor? Opposed? Approved. **(Vote: 4/0/0/0)**

**I.R. 1730 (P) Designating week of September 30, 2001 as “Kawasaki Disease Awareness Week.” (Cooper)**

**LEGISLATOR POSTAL:**

Motion.

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

Second.

**LEGISLATOR HALEY:**

May I? This is interesting because you talk about, we started a few years ago, we made May is ALS or Lou Gehrig’s awareness, and I think it is very interesting to note that for instance they still don’t know what causes Lou Gehrig’s disease. They don’t even have a clue. I think that is the first step, obviously, to developing some sort of a cure. Commissioner, this is obviously the same situation with Kawasaki; right?

**COMM. BRADLEY:**

Correct.

**LEGISLATOR HALEY:**

Do you have anything to expand upon?

**COMM. BRADLEY:**

No, it is a rare disease. It is a disease that has a high morbidity and mortality, one where treatments are not wonderful. There aren’t enough days, months or weeks in the year, though, unfortunately, to honor every disease.

**LEGISLATOR HALEY:**

With reference to Kawasaki Disease, it says here that it is an insidious disease involving an inflammation of blood vessels, damage to the heart, risk of heart attack. And it says it is, “accompanied by rash, fever, swelling, reddening, and it is often extremely difficult to diagnose and can be fatal if not treated in a timely fashion.” And it says here, “Whereas more than 1,800 cases of Kawasaki are diagnosed annually, of which approximately 80% are children”, do we have a figure of how many? Do you have any idea off the top of your head how many people actually pass away from Kawasaki?

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

Or how many in Suffolk even?

**COMM. BRADLEY:**

No. I can try to find out. Unfortunately, it is not a reportable disease. I could try to identify in terms of –

**LEGISLATOR HALEY:**

I just thought you might know off the top of your head.

**COMM. BRADLEY:**

Many people will go through their whole careers as medical providers and never see a case. It is a very rare condition.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

We have a motion and a second. All in favor? Opposed? Approved. **(Vote: 4/0/0/0)**

**I.R. 1751 (P) Accepting and appropriating 100% Federal Grant Funds from the New York State Department of Health Services, to the Department of Health Services, Division of Patient Care Services for the WIC Nutrition Program and creating and abolishing a position in the Department of Health Services for this program. (County Executive).**

We have had a request to table this because of the difficulty with the State budget. I will make a motion to table one cycle.

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

Just on that motion. How is the difficulty of the State budget affecting this grant?

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

Bonnie.

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

Since it is pass-through monies from the Feds to us.

**COMM. BRADLEY:**

It has to do with the bare bones budget that was –

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

Well, I just want to hear it on the record what is going on here.

**MS. GODSMEN:**

The County Executive's Budget Office has asked the individual divisions that these grants affect to get a letter from the State stating that the money is indeed in the budget because of all of the concerns that are going on in Albany right now. They will be able to get the letters, it is just that it does take a little bit of time. So we just ask for it to be cycled for one cycle – tabled, I'm sorry. Tabled for one cycle and it doesn't affect the start dates of the grants at all. The divisions don't have a problem with it. It will not affect any program.

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

This is really pass-through monies.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

Motion to table.

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

Reluctantly. I am not seconding that, no.

**LEGISLATOR HALEY:**

Second.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

All in favor? Opposed? Tabled. **(Vote: 4/0/0/0)**

**I.R. 1752 (P) Accepting and appropriating 100% Federal Grant Funds from the New York State Department of Health Services, to the Department of Health Services, Division of Patient Care Services for Immunization Action Plan, creating and abolishing a position in the Department of Health Services for this program. (County Executive).**

Motion to table for the same reason. Second by Legislator Haley. All in favor? Opposed? It will be tabled. **(Vote: 4/0/0/0)**

**I.R. 1785 (P) Authorizing the approval for the Department of Health Services, Bureau of Public Health Nursing to pay membership dues for the participation in the National Association for Home Care. (County Executive).**

Can you just elaborate, Commissioner Bradley?

**COMM. BRADLEY:**

This is actually not the first time we've looked to do this. We have done this for the nursing home. We have also done it for the managed care plan, is that especially in those areas where a major provider -- there are many issues that go on that we're somewhat isolated from. And by joining these organizations we learn about ways to not only improve programs but to financially improve ourselves in terms of data management, collection of data, billing the State, dealing with all of those issues. And by joining with other providers in an organization such as this, we learn about these things. We have done the same thing for our managed care plan, and because we participated we were able to join a lawsuit against the State and we recovered more than the cost of the membership by being a member in that organization.

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

I have a question.

**COMM. BRADLEY:**

Yes.

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

Why couldn't this be done just administratively? Why do we need to have a resolution to do this?

**COMM. BRADLEY:**

Because I think if it is over a certain amount, which is \$1,000, you have to go through a resolution.

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

And how much --

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

The membership fee is \$2,818.

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

Okay. Thank you.

**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

Motion to approve?

**LEGISLATOR FOLEY:**

Motion.



**CHAIRPERSON FIELDS:**

All in favor? Opposed? Approved. **(Vote: 4/0/0/0).** Motion to adjourn. This is a record meeting. It is five to eleven. Thank you.

*(The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 a.m.)*